

# Publication restoration

*Local woman is a book doctor who heals literary treasures*

By Jennifer Schmidt  
Leader-Telegram staff

Julia Stanley is your battered book's best friend.

Does an aging publication have a broken or disconnected spine? Piece of cake.

Do loose pages need reattaching? No problem.

Got torn pages? Stanley has just the thing for that too.

The 20-year-old who repairs and restores books has been at the trade for 3½ years and figures she's improved the literary lives of some 300 to 500 books.

"It's such a unique art," Stanley said on a recent afternoon, a stack of about 30 ailing books waiting for her attention on a nearby counter.

Stanley, of Eau Claire, has seemingly found her niche in the book repairing business, attracting clients from Maine to California — and even one from Singapore.

"There's definitely a lot of work coming in," she said, crediting a portion of her business to referrals from local libraries and bookstores.

Fifty to 60 percent of her business is Internet-based, with the rest generated locally, she said. She believes she's the only professional book repairer in a 50-mile radius of Eau Claire.

Bibles represent about 70 percent of her business, likely because they're used

so frequently, she said. But she's worked on everything from cookbooks to a leather-bound work from the 1640s.

The technique used depends on the book. Most need to be stripped — meaning their covers need to be taken off, their spines cleaned up and their pages repaired — and recovered. Others just need recov-

## Book Work

**What:** Julia Stanley's book repair and restoration business.

**Cost:** Varies by book, although charges average \$20 to \$150.

**Turnaround time:** About two weeks.

**Where:** Located in Crossroad Books, 301 S. Barstow St.

**Hours:** Call 456-1421 or (800) 504-9341 for an appointment.

ering, which involves taking the original cover off and making a new one, using leather or standard material, and binding the new cover onto the text block.

"You use glue. You get dirty. It's not the cleanest job in the world," Stanley said as classical music softly chimed in the background.

Her only formal training came from attending a couple of day classes at a Madison bindery when she was 17. The rest she learned on her own, reading up on the craft in books and on Web sites.

Stanley initially ran her business from her Cameron Street home. About a year ago she moved to her present location inside Crossroad Books, 301 S. Barstow St.

As part of the deal, Stanley regularly repairs books for Crossroad. Mark Patterson, one of the owners, said the arrangement has worked out well.

"She's good to us, and we try to be good to her. I think she does pretty good work," Patterson said, showing off a book from the 1830s she recently repaired. "She's done a lot of nice things."

Tom Wineinger of Eau Claire, a retired UW-Eau Claire math professor, sought out Stanley's services this spring. A colleague wrote a manuscript, and Wineinger wanted to make it into a book for his personal collection. He found Stanley in the yellow pages.

"I thought she was easy to work with, very accommodating and did very good work," he said.



Staff photo by Steve Kindeman

Julia Stanley of Eau Claire, who repairs and restores books, spoke with a customer Friday about her repair. The 20-year-old was inspired to get into the business after her father, a local pastor, struggled to find someone to repair his Bible.

## Daily

### Tonight

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